

IN THE CLAIMS

1.-7. (canceled)

8. (currently amended) A method for making a composite, reinforced collapsed bulk bin assembly, capable of being erected to a deployed, articulated configuration, comprising the steps of:

providing at least one blank, operably configured to form, upon manipulation and adhesion along a manufacturer's joint thereof, a collapsed bulk bin body;

manipulating and adhering the at least one blank, along the manufacturer's joint to provide a bulk bin body, with at least one bottom panel and a plurality of side walls, operably configured to be disposed substantially perpendicular to the at least one bottom panel, when the bulk bin body is in a deployed configuration;

positioning the bulk bin body in a collapsed configuration, wherein some of the side walls are disposed in juxtaposed, overlying, parallel orientation relative to remaining ones of the side walls;

providing at least one substantially stretchable reinforcing sleeve, the at least one reinforcing sleeve being formed with a tubular portion, having a longitudinal axis and a circumference which, when the tubular portion is flattened and in an unstressed state, is less than an external circumference of the bulk bin body, when the bulk bin body is in a flat, collapsed configuration; and

placing the at least one reinforcing sleeve, snugly about the plurality of side walls, of the bulk bin body, when the bulk bin body is in its collapsed configuration, so that when the at least one reinforcing sleeve is in position about the plurality of side walls of the bulk bin body, the reinforcing sleeve is slightly stretched, relative to an at-rest, unstressed state of the reinforcing sleeve, wherein placing the at least one reinforcing sleeve onto the bulk bin body further includes:

bowing the collapsed bulk bin body, so that a chord distance between opposing edges of the bowed, collapsed bulk bin body is substantially less than a corresponding distance between opposed edges of the collapsed bulk bin body, when in an at-rest, unstressed configuration;

sliding the at least one reinforcing sleeve onto the bowed, collapsed bulk bin body;
and

releasing the bowed, collapsed bulk bin body, to permit it to reconfigure toward its at-rest, unstressed configuration.

9. (original) The method according to claim 8, wherein the step of placing the reinforcing sleeve onto the collapsed bulk bin body, further comprises the step of placing the reinforcing sleeve into a stretched configuration, in the amount of one to two percent, inclusive, of its at-rest, unstressed circumference, when the reinforcing sleeve is in place on the erected bulk bin body.

10. (previously presented) The method according to claim 8, further comprising the step of fabricating the bulk bin body from at least one of paper, paperboard, and corrugated paperboard.

11. (previously presented) The method according to claim 8, further comprising the step of fabricating the reinforcing sleeve from a substantially stretchable material comprising at least one of polyethylene, and polypropylene.

12. (original) The method according to claim 8, further comprising the step of monolithically forming the reinforcing sleeve as a single extruded member, cut off from a continuous tubular extrusion of reinforcing sleeve material.

13. (currently amended) The method according to claim 8, further comprising ~~the step of forming the~~ at least one reinforcing sleeve with two seams extending in a direction substantially parallel to a vertically extending direction along the side walls of the bulk bin body.

14. (original) The method according to claim 8, further comprising the step of providing the bulk bin body, when in its deployed configuration, with a polygonal cross-section.

15. (canceled)

16. (previously presented) The method according to claim 8, wherein the step of placing the at least one reinforcing sleeve onto the bulk bin body comprises the steps of:

applying a force to the reinforcing sleeve to stretch the reinforcing sleeve in a direction transverse to the longitudinal axis;

sliding the stretched reinforcing sleeve over the plurality of side walls of the collapsed bulk bin body; and

removing the stretching force from the reinforcing sleeve.

17. (previously presented) The method according to claim 8, wherein the step of providing at least one substantially stretchable reinforcing sleeve further comprises providing at least one substantially stretchable reinforcing sleeve, wherein the at least one reinforcing sleeve being formed with a seamless, tubular portion.

18. (previously presented) The method according to claim 8, wherein the step of providing at least one substantially stretchable reinforcing sleeve further comprises:

providing at least one substantially stretchable reinforcing sleeve, the at least one reinforcing sleeve being formed with a tubular portion, a sealed top end, and an open bottom end; and

placing the at least one reinforcing sleeve, snugly about the plurality of side walls of the bulk bin body by placing the bulk bin body within the open end of the reinforcing sleeve such that the sealed end of the reinforcing sleeve covers an open top end of the bulk bin body to reduce moisture intrusion into the bulk bin body prior to loading the bulk bin body, the sealed

end of the reinforcing sleeve is configured to be unsealed to allow for loading of the bulk bin body.

19. (previously presented) The method according to claim 8, wherein the bulk bin body has a height defined by the plurality of side walls when the bulk bin body is in the deployed configuration, and wherein the step of providing at least one substantially stretchable reinforcing sleeve further comprises providing at least one substantially stretchable reinforcing sleeve, wherein the at least one reinforcing sleeve being formed with a tubular portion, the tubular portion having a height substantially equal to the height of the bulk bin body.

20. (previously presented) The method according to claim 8, wherein the bulk bin body has a height defined by the plurality of side walls when the bulk bin body is in the deployed configuration, and wherein the step of providing at least one substantially stretchable reinforcing sleeve further comprises providing at least one substantially stretchable reinforcing sleeve, wherein the at least one reinforcing sleeve being formed with a tubular portion, the tubular portion having a height approximately equal to one-quarter of the height of the bulk bin body.